Vol. II. Numb. 29.

The EXAMINER.

From Thursday *June* 12, to Thursday *June* 19. 1712.

Respondeam igitur non desiisse pœnitere me Belli, neque desiturum, ante invictum nostrum Imperatorem incusare quàm finitum aliquâ tolerabili Conditione Bellum videro: nec mihi Pacis antiquæ desiderium ulla alia res, quam Pax nova finiet. Liv.

SINCE the Interest of the Whigs has in many Instances of late appear'd so inconsiderable, and their Numbers so small in both Houses of Parliament, as well as other Parts of the Nation, it may possibly be looked upon to be ungenerous, and, as it were, insulting the Dead, to attack them: Yet, since they seem not inclinable to desist from infecting Her M——y's well-disposed Subjects with pernicious and false Doctrines; nor from Propagating, by their Coffee-house-Orators and Hireling Scribblers, their scandalous Invectives against those *Entirely English* Ministers that the Queen has thought fit to make Choice of, and the concurrent Voice of Her *Good People* has almost unanimously approved of; nor from Libelling, with Licence peculiar to the Faction, even their own Representatives; and since of all the ill Causes which these *Few* ill Men have undertaken to defend, there is none more weak in my Opinion, nay, perhaps none more wicked, than their insisting upon the Continuance of this profuse and bloody War, I hope it will not be thought unseasonable to bestow this whole Paper upon that Subject.

When the Business of entring into this War was debated in Pamphlets and Conversation, I remember I was of Opinion it was reasonable to try the Experiment of wresting the Monarchy of Spain out of the Hands of the Duke of Anjou; but I never imagin'd it reasonable for us to plunge ourselves into immense Debts, and infinite Difficulties of all kinds, in pursuing that, in which I think we had little or no Prospect of succeeding, in carrying on a War in such a manner as was likelier to bring us into the Spanish Condition, than ever to gain the Spanish Territories; for in my poor Judgment, after we had been twice in Possession of the Capital of Spain, and forc'd to quit it, it could not but be look'd upon to be as Chimerical a Project to think of re-conquering that Country, as it appear'd to have been, to think at first of the Revolution of it; and it could not reasonably be thought Practicable to get it by Conquering other Countries, when in the only Country in which we could promise ourselves any tolerable Success, the Enemies fortify'd Towns were so numerous and so strong, besides all their other Advantages, that *there, at least, it was probable, they would be able to bear being Beaten, longer than we could afford to Beat them.* These were my Sentiments, and therefore I must own, I was never more concern'd upon any Publick Account, than I was when the Negotiations at the Hague and Gertruydenberg broke off; then I could not forbear apprehending we made use of our Victories rather to prolong, than to finish the War; that we apply'd our Strength and our Politicks chiefly, if not solely, to support either the Interest or the Glory of our Allies, the Emperor, the Dutch, the Portuguese, and the *Prince of Mendelheim*; and that we had it less in our View to make all of them safe, than to make some of them formidable. The Way of Managing the War too, appeared to me so senseless, at the same time it appeared to all the World so amazingly expensive, that I could not but be jealous that it was designed rather against Ourselves, than against our Enemies; that those who were our Masters at that time had dark Purposes, and perhaps were contriving, that we should either not be able, or not think it worth while, to resist any Invasion, either from the Pretender abroad, or our Tyrants at home, when we had hardly any thing left to lose; in short, that 'twas intended this flourishing Kingdom shou'd be brought to the extremest Degree of Poverty, which is often the Cause, as 'tis always the Effect, of Slavery.

These Reflections, and others of this kind, have often made me ready to think it difficult to contrive such a Peace as cou'd be likely to bring so sudden and so certain a Ruin upon Us, as this extravagant War: And therefore I cannot, I'm confident, with Justice, be suspected, out of Complaisance or Flattery, to give my Approbation to so very good a Peace, as Her M——y is now making for us. But though this Peace will probably be a Safe one, and without Dispute will be a very Honourable one, I must still think, in my humble Opinion, that Her M——y's faithful Subjects have not more Reason to be pleas'd with the Peace it self, than they have to applaud Her Steadiness and Resolution in pursuing it, against the stubborn and crafty Opposition of some Allies abroad, that envy the Prosperity of our Country, and *their Confederates here at home*, that cannot prevail upon themselves to like the Constitution of it.

If

If it were neceſſary, I cou'd, upon this Occaſion, quote many Examples, both antient and modern, to prove, that ſome Nations, even in the moſt proſperous Condition, have been ſo far intoxicated with Succeſs, as to perſiſt in a War to their utter Ruin: But there is one Inſtance of this kind, in *Livy*, that may ſo eaſily, as well as ſo juſtly, be applied by the *Candid* Reader, to our Circumſtances, that I hope I ſhall be allowed, without any Imputation of Pedantry, to mention it.

That Hiſtorian tells us, That after the Battle of *Cannæ*, there was a great Debate in the *Carthaginian* Senate about the Meaſures that were fit to be taken in that Juncture; *Hannibal* demanded great Supplies of all kinds to carry on the War *with Vigour*; all thoſe of his Faction ſeconded that Propoſal, and branded the beſt Patriots, who differed from them in Judgment, with the unpopular Name of *Romans*. However *Hanno*, one of thoſe Romans, had the Boldneſs to give his Opinion for Peace, and to tell his Country-men, That he could not go along with them in the General Joy for that great Victory, unleſs the Effect of their Succeſſes was an advantageous Peace: That he obſerved, that at the ſame time *Hannibal* told them he had deſtroyed the Enemies Armies, he deſired more Forces; at the ſame time he told them he had got a vaſt Booty, he deſired great Supplies; *What more could He have asked*, ſays he, *if he had been beaten?* However this honeſt Gentleman, though he had probably many of his Opinion, had then but few of his Side: *Hannibal* was ſo very powerful, that his Partizans cou'd not but be very numerous; and many People were ſo blinded with the *Victories* of this Fortunate, as well as *really Skilful* General, that they would be contented with nothing leſs than the entire Conqueſt of the *Romans*; ſo 'twas voted to puſh on the War with Vigour; the Conſequence of which was the entire Ruin of the Carthaginians.

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